

294 The nearly flat sole is cut from the thick, fibrous, and nearly inflexible leaf
 [229] base of a moriche palm. On the upper (foot) side, the anterior end is peeled,
 [215] while the heel part is left with the smooth surface of the cortex. Cords of
 moriche fiber are used, several cords running together from holes on each side
 at the front of the heel part (at the instep) and these run behind and above the
 heel when the sandal is worn. A double cord is attached through three holes
 (in longitudinal series) at the front part of the sandal so as to run between the
 first (big) and second toes, then separating and tying to the heel cords above
 291 their attachments on each side. Essentially similar sandals are worn by almost
 171 all the sabana Indians of this whole area, even into northern Brazil. They are
 182 another indication, if any is needed, that the Kamarakotos are decidedly sabana
 Indians, for sandals are rarely or never used by the forest tribes and are, for in-
 [407] stance, unknown in the mainly forested Amazon valley, proper. Even the
 sabana Indians, including the Kamarakotos, seldom wear them, however, doing
 so only on relatively long marches in the dry season and taking them off around
 [177] their homes or on soft or slippery terrane. These sandals are called pural while
 [192] the recently introduced Venezuelan sandals are called by their Spanish name,
 "alpargata."

291 The primitive female costume consists only of an apron just large enough
 to cover the pubic region and with attached strings by which it is tied around
 [286] the waist. This apron, the mosa or motsa, is now always a woven fabric with
 [172] beads. Like the dress it is an adaptation of a foreign material to native use,
 but it is a far older one and merely uses the material in a purely native pattern.
 These aprons are very attractive and are made in a great variety of patterns —
 [53] indeed I have never seen two exactly alike. The favorite colors are white and
 dark blue and usually the main part of the apron will be solidly one of these,
 with geometrical borders of the other above and below. There may rarely be an
 all-over pattern or a median band, and colors other than blue or white are some-
 times used, but in all that I have seen blue or white predominates, 133 Some
 of the women always wear the mosa, even though a dress be worn over it. The
 dress has thus supplemented and not supplanted the older costume and this is an
 interesting and quite literal example of cultural stratification.

174 It is commonly believed that all the Carib tribes, which would include
 291 the Kamarakotos, went without any clothing, even loincloths and aprons, in pre-
 [172] Columbian days and that the practice of covering the pubic region arose under
 European influence. Koch-Grünberg, for instance, states this very positively
 as regards the loincloth and notes as a decisive argument that even the (Taure-
 pán, not Arekuna in general) name kamisa, is foreign. De Goeje is equally
 positive as regards the Dutch and French Guiana Caribs and cites Barrère as say-
 ing in 1743 that they were completely naked. Roth quotes numerous authorities
 to this effect regarding British Guiana Indians and apparently inclines to agree
 with the consensus although he does not give a specific statement of his own
 133 [see footnote on p. 322, category 116 - Analyst]

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291 opinion. Despite this array of authority, I venture to disagree to the extent of believing that both the loincloth and the apron are aboriginal, although their distribution has undoubtedly been modified since the European invasion and perhaps in part because of it.

No one can or does doubt that many tropical Indians went completely naked, and some do to this day, but it is faulty generalization to conclude from early observations of this fact that the loincloth and apron are not aboriginal. Indeed many or most of the early authorities who state that the Indians are naked go on to say that they have loincloths or aprons or both. This is true of Barrere, on whom De Goeje principally relies, and an equally early authority (Gumilla, 1745) also notes the use of loincloths. Harcourt (in "Purchas his pilgrimes"), a still older authority, says, like Barrere, that the Indians are "all naked" and, also like Barrere, immediately adds that some of them do wear loincloths. The evidence of the earliest authorities is not really that clothing was unknown, but merely that some Indians dispensed with it, a fact that is not in any doubt for that or any subsequent time. References to the use of public coverings are as old as those to complete nakedness and often are the same references. In the first place these early observers often called an Indian naked even if he (or she) covered the pubic region, but was otherwise bare, and in the second place they emphasized the true nakedness of some individuals or tribes without meaning or saying that all the Indians were stark naked. The scanty but fairly definite historic evidence is thus opposed to the conclusion so often drawn from it: it strongly suggests that some Carib or other tropical Indians were wearing loincloths, at least, probably also aprons, when the Europeans first encountered them.

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291 In any case, I am quite at a loss to see by what reasoning it could be supposed likely that these coverings arose under European influence. The idea
177 verges on the ridiculous, because it is quite obvious that no European visitors wore anything of the sort. They may have urged the more widespread use of the native garment, *faute de mieux*, although there is little clear evidence even of this, but their efforts in general and as recorded by themselves were of course to make the Indians adopt European garments, dresses for the women and trousers for the men. In fact, to a European missionary or voyager the native apron as female raiment is scarcely more modest than complete nudity and it is contrary to common sense as well as to the records to suppose that they introduced this scanty garment.

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114 Koch-Grünberg's etymological argument is also valueless. Contrary to
291 his statement (also made by Roth and others), there is a native Carib word for loincloth: it is *wayiku* (and numerous variants) which does not, as commonly supposed, apply only to the female garment. In some tribes it means that; in others, it includes both male and female public coverings; in still others, including the Kamarakotos, it means only the male loincloth. It is reasonably certain that the word originally applied to both male and female garments and

174 that its application has become differentiated in later times. The apron, as 114 distinct from a loincloth (such as also has been used by females) is not a 291 wayiku among the Arekunas and many other Caribs, but a mota (motsa, etc.) and wayiku as a Carib word in general almost surely did not originally mean "apron" but only "loincloth," male or female. Where the word "camisa," in various forms, appears, it has driven out the native word not because the article of apparel was new to the Indians but because the material from which it now came to be made was new. "Camisa" came to mean primarily this foreign material, trade cloth, and secondarily, by a common linguistic transfer, a wayiku made of such cloth. Indeed this etymological argument against the native origin of the loincloth runs abruptly into contradiction because it agrees that there is a native word for the woman's apron and hence logically should grant this aboriginal origin, but the testimony of the early visitors and of comparative studies is that if either is older the loincloth antedates the apron.

177 Finally, the use of foreign materials (trade cloth and glass beads) in these garments is not evidence against their antiquity, because this is clearly a mere substitution of foreign for native materials in a purely native finished object. In fact both loincloths and aprons of entirely native materials are still encountered among the more remote and poorer tribes, showing the basis to which the preferable new materials have been adapted.

291 The fact, as I believe it to be, that pubic coverings are aboriginal 834 among the Kamarakotos and culturally allied groups may also be correlated 174 with the fact that the adults of this tribe are extremely modest (more so than Europeans) about uncovering the pubic parts, and are not modest about anything else, even such things as physiological functions or female breasts, which Europeans regard as equally to be concealed.

291 Very small boys do run naked but they put on loincloths long before pu- 855 berty. Sometimes they put on the belt, which is completely nonconcealing but has an almost symbolic significance of departure from babyhood, before they don the loincloth itself. Even if trousers are available, they are seldom worn until after puberty. Girl babies are sometimes naked but are now sometimes supplied with dresses almost at once after birth. Whether dressed or not, by the time they can walk well and leave their mothers, they begin to wear the bead apron, beginning with a very small size and graduating to successively larger ones until they are grown.

Ornaments.

301 Except for particular occasions, especially dances, the men do not usually wear any ornaments, although earrings, necklaces and armlets are occasionally worn.

They use the rattle for
 534 dancing, but a legend suggests its connection with magic, a connection which
 535 Izikowitz believes to have been involved in the spread of this instrument. In
 773 this legend a maraka appears as a magical instrument the sounding of which
 224 causes peccaries, the favorite prey of hunters, to appear. In fact the use of the
 rattle in dancing is probably connected with this sort of hunting magic, although
 the connection is not now clearly recognized by the Indians.

534 3. The Kamarakotos make drums (Fig. 68) of various sizes but all are
 constructed in the same way and all are light and portable so that the player
 can carry one and dance at the same time. The kettledrum and the tubular
 (open bottom) drum are unknown, only the two-headed form being used. The
 body is made of a section of a tree trunk (a white, soft, unidentified wood) of
 appropriate diameter, with the center hollowed out. A single round hole is
 [237] made in the side as an air vent. The drumheads are made of hide, deer, lama,
 peccary, etc. — a specimen has deerskin on one end and peccary on the other
 and apparently any hide of proper size is used indiscriminately. The hair-side
 is out on the finished drum but the hair is removed from the exposed surface.
 [239] The skin is lashed by spiral curagua windings to a liana hoop of proper size to
 fit snugly on the drum body onto which it is slipped. It is held in place and the
 drumhead stretched by placing a second hoop distal to it (nearer the end of the
 drum) on each end and these tightening hoops, which are not fastened to the
 drumhead or body, are drawn toward each other by a crisscross lashing of heavy
 cords. Where these cross, at the middle of the side of the drum, a circular
 lashing of the same cord is fastened and from this a carrying cord projects,
 which may be made into a loop by tying its end to one of the lashings. The
 drum is carried in one arm and played with a single stick held in the other hand.

114 The origin and distribution of drums in South America have given rise
 171 to extensive discussion, most of which is adequately summarized by Izikowitz.
 ● 174 The pre-Columbian distribution cannot now be exactly reconstructed except
 534 that it was certainly wide. The kettledrum is the oldest and from it an open-
 bottomed drum developed in Mexico and Central America. It was formerly
 supposed that two-headed drums were all post-Columbian but Izikowitz has
 shown that such drums are indigenous at least in Peru and adjacent regions.
 On the other hand Izikowitz agrees with most previous students in concluding
 that the drum was unknown in northeastern South America (Amazonia, the
 Guianas, Venezuela, and the West Indies, at least) until introduced by Euro-
 peans. Only a few students have ventured a contrary opinion, for example,
 Williams says of the Makuchi word sanbura, "This may perhaps be a native
 word as the drum must have existed before the advent of Europeans." Roth has
 pointed out apparently conclusive evidence that the first Europeans, including
 Columbus himself, found single-membrane drums in use in the West Indies,
 evidence apparently overlooked by Izikowitz. A few early travelers in the
 Guianas and in Amazonia also mention what seem to be one-membrane drums

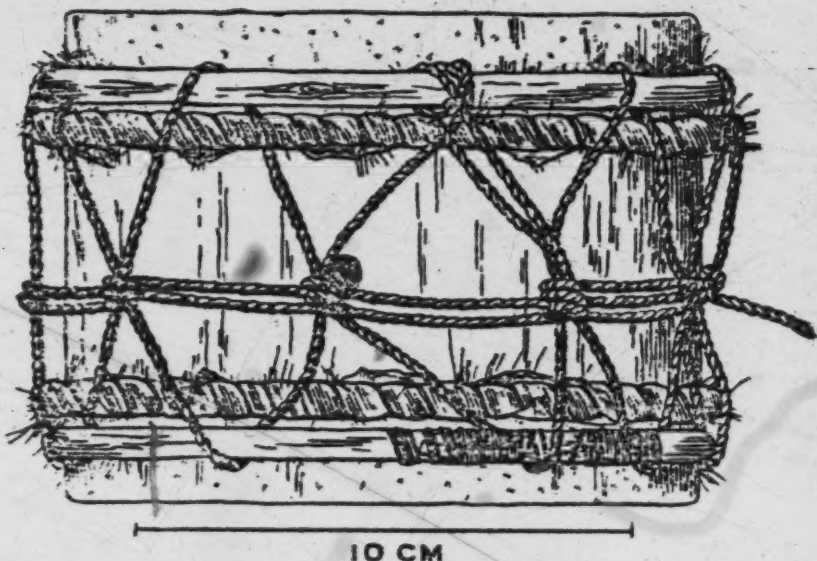
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Fig. 68 — Kamarakoto Drum.

A small hand drum such as is carried by the drummer in a parichara dance. Drums up to twice this size or rather more are made in essentially the same way.

[535]

114 (see Roth) but these observations are too recent to exclude indirect European
171 influence, improbable as this is for drums of such a typically American sort.

- 174 Roth concludes that the double-membrane drum was probably not European but
- 534 introduced from North America (i. e. inferentially from the North American Indians) but after the European invasion, a conclusion that has not been accepted and that is not very seriously supported by any cogent evidence.

The evidence that the drum is not indigenous in this area is chiefly that it shows almost unmistakable European influence in the usual method of lashing and that over this whole area, regardless of linguistic stocks, it is called by names which, despite Williams' doubts, are almost certainly derived from the Spanish or Portuguese, of which the Kamarakoto word sambura is typical.

This evidence proves that the drums of this region show some, perhaps only indirect, European influence. They do not prove that the drums are of European origin or that they are not derived by post-Columbian evolution from an indigenous drum. Izikowitz, himself, concludes that the essentially similar drums of the Chipayas (southwestern Bolivia) are modified derivatives of pre-Columbian drums and he also notes the difficulty of being sure that a European

114 type of drum has not simply replaced or modified a purely Indian type over
171 wide areas, although he seems not to have paid sufficient heed to his own warn-
174 ings when he drew his sweeping conclusions. It is impossible to be quite sure,
534 either way, but certainly the flat statement that this region had no drums until
European introduction is quite unjustified and it is possible, or even probable,
that a native drum existed and that it acquired a European name when and be-
cause it was modified by introduction of European technical elements of con-
struction.

171 Roth emphasizes that British Guiana drums have a "silent" end (i.e. one
534 that is not struck) on which there is a "resounder" or snare. The Kamarakoto
drums have no snare and the two ends are equivalent in structure and tonal qual-
ity, even though they are commonly of different sorts of skin.

534 4. The typical instrument of the parichara dance, also used in several
[535] other dances, is a very simple and primitive trumpet called kamai. These are
[824] plain hollow tubes, open at both ends and with any internal partitions removed,
of Cecropia (doubtless the primitive material, "yagrumo" in Venezuelan
Spanish) or bamboo. They are played, like our metallic trumpets, by applying
the mouth to one open end and causing the compressed lips to vibrate by blow-
ing. There are no stops or any special mouthpiece and each kamai produces a
single note, but several different sizes, each with its own note, are used by the
different players at the same time. We could not detect any particular relation-
ship or harmony between the different pitches of kamai blown simultaneously.
[53] Among other Indian tribes such trumpets are often more or less elaborately
decorated, but no decoration whatever had been applied to the several Kamara-
koto examples that I observed. This is in keeping with the almost complete
absence of extrinsic ornamentation on Kamarakoto articles of manufacture.
There is no question that this instrument is entirely indigenous. It is among
the oldest of all native South American instruments still in use and the Kamara-
kotos have it in irreducibly simple and primitive form.

[172] 5. One side-blown cow-horn trumpet was seen, but it was an object of
curiosity to the Indians themselves and represents a very recent intrusion, not
[439] part of Kamarakoto culture. Cows are completely unknown in this region and
the manufactured trumpet was imported by intertribal trade as a curiosity,
probably ultimately from British Guiana although I could not surely confirm
[172] this. Izikowitz notes the presence of such trumpets at various points in South
America (the nearest in the Roraima region, represented by a specimen in the
Göteborgs Museum) and believes that they represent Negro influence.

534 Although their use of an object so foreign to them is not a very vital
177 datum, it has some bearing on diffusion and transfer of use, which is here seen
[202] in its earliest stage. It is, from this point of view, interesting that Izikowitz
says that in this region (the Guianas, Roraima, etc.) side-blown trumpets in
general and cow-horn trumpets in particular are used only for signaling. The

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Stamping tubes — Not seen, but said to occur. They are known from the Taurepánes and Makuchis.

Friction idiophone of tortoise shell — Occurs among the Makuchis, but probably not among Arekunas.

Humming top — Known among Taurepánes.

The following important South American instruments seem surely to be unknown to the Kamarakotos or their closest allies, a negative distributional fact of some interest:

Hollow log drum

Metal jingle rattles and bells

Kettledrum

Tubular drum

Cordophones, in general, especially the "musical bow"

Bullroarer

Shell trumpet

Pottery instruments in general: rattles, trumpets, flutes, etc.

Complex trumpets

Clarinets¹⁶⁴

Globular flutes

Notched flutes (quenas)

Flutes with attached ducts

Panpipes¹⁶⁵

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With the exception of the drum, which may be introduced and does show some (indirect) European influence, and the cow-horn trumpet which does not really belong in a list of musical instruments, the simple repertory of Kamarakoto instruments is strictly aboriginal and must nearly represent the pre-Columbian musical culture of this general region.

Transportation

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[34]
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[43]

Although with fixed abodes and in no sense nomadic, the Kamarakotos are not sedentary. Within the group, they are in constant motion, visiting each other for dances and drinking parties, for hunting and fishing, for trading, or simply for variety. Individuals and small groups also make long journeys, mainly for trading, and they have explored almost all of southeastern Venezuela, from the last civilized settlements to the north to, and quite possibly beyond, the British and Brazilian borders to the east and south and well beyond the Caroní to the west.

424

These journeys are almost exclusively by land. Unlike the island and coastal Caribs, the Kamarakotos use canoes mostly as an adjunct rather than as the main means of travel. We frequently met Indians who had walked long

164, 165 [see footnotes on pp. 326-27, category 116 - Analysis]

[229]

THE OLD AND THE NEW

- 177 The Indians are most interesting, from many points of view, for the sur-
178 vivals in their culture of aboriginal objects and customs, but it would be a mis-
take to think of these entirely indigenous elements as the real and true Indian
culture of today and to study them only from that point of view, rejecting later
modifications as irrelevant or solely as intrusions. The Kamarakotos as they
exist today are subject like all of us to ever changing influences and have a cul-
ture that is integrally theirs, wherever its elements came from, and that is com-
pounded, as ours is, of a mixture of older and newer parts. Indeed the mixture
of such diverse elements in their culture is in itself interesting and instructive.
The fact that they are now observed in the very process of transition from primi-
tive culture to what we believe to be advanced culture makes their study more,
and not less, interesting than would be that of a tribe showing no European in-
fluence, if such a tribe existed.

Cultural Contacts

- 174 Although we know virtually nothing of the history of this particular tribe
177 before the present generation, it is possible to infer the general course of their
cultural contacts with some probability. Elements that were not developed
directly or indirectly under European influence are usually readily recognizable.
In some cases there is room for argument, such, for instance, as the use of
square shelters which I believe to be indigenous but some students do not. There
are not many such cases and they do not obscure the general facts. These abo-
riginal elements may be considered representative of a single culture level basic
for the tribe as we see it today. Of course this culture itself evolved and is a
mixture of elements developed at different times and by different tribes, dif-
fused in varying patterns, the overlap of which in this precise region gave the

●174 typical Kamarakoto combination of elements. It would be fascinating to trace
177 this history and this has been done to a very limited extent, but from the present point of view all these elements are properly relegated to one level. This is true even though some of the aboriginal culture elements may have arisen or may have reached the Kamarakotos in post-Columbian times. The sequence is not here exactly recoverable and even an innovation within the last few years must be considered as fully aboriginal if it was not effected by any European influence. For present purposes these things are, then, "the old," and anything resulting from European influence is "the new."

Innovation, in this sense, began at the instant when Indians sighted Columbus's ships in 1492 and has continued with acceleration since that time. From the start the Indians found some European imports so useful to their own way of life that they accepted them at once and these things, once available in any quantity, spread so rapidly that they were soon in use by Indians who had never seen a white man. Steel knives and the banana are cases in point, both imports but so anciently and so thoroughly naturalized that they are today integral parts of most purely Indian cultures.

The Kamarakotos fully shared in this now old spread of introduced culture elements. It is not known and it does not particularly matter whether they received them from Europeans when the missions and the conquistadors invaded the Orinoco and the Caroni or whether they received them from other Indians. They belong to another cultural level which may for convenience be called the Colonial level (as regards this region). It is characterized by the fact that it was things, not customs or ideas, that were spread, and that they were things that were highly acceptable to an Indian because they made his life easier and more pleasant without in any fundamental way changing it. For instance, the
[411] Indians then began to use steel arrowheads, which were better than their old ones.
[262] but they continued to use the fully aboriginal bow and arrow. They began to eat bananas, which were a delightful addition to diet, but their aboriginal agricultural system was not changed.

After this, often hardly separable from it in a given case but fundamentally unlike in general, came a second sequence or level of European cultural contacts, one in which direct and close contact with people of partly or wholly European culture was involved. For some Indians this phase also began in colonial times, and even ended there with complete absorption into the modified culture of mainly European origin, but for convenience in speaking of this particular region it may be called the modern level. Many new things are introduced on this level, often more than on the colonial level. Some of them are merely improvements on colonial innovations. For instance, the colonial flint
[372] and steel replaced the aboriginal fire drill and now the modern match will eventually replace the flint and steel, all without any profound cultural significance.

177 The modern level is characterized, however, by definite changes in modes of

177 the thoroughly civilized centers, but the European elements are so much more
178 numerous that Indian culture has there quite disappeared as such.

• [174] This trend has occasionally been checked or reversed temporarily, but in the long run it seems to be inevitable. If Fray Ramón Bueno's Camaracotos were the ancestors of our Kamarakotos, they had in some respects been as much affected by European culture by 1800 as they have again now, and in the meantime reverted to a definitely more aboriginal condition. Whether true of this tribe or not, such was the history of some tribes as the conquistadors and missionaries advanced in the Orinoco Basin and then retreated again. Now another forward movement is well under way and the usual forward trend is re-established and is likely to be permanent.

000 Supposing that this trend continues, as it will unless checked by unpredictable disaster, the eventual complete "Venezolanization" of the Kamarakotos is inevitable in the usual, unguided course of social evolution, a result that means the certain extinction of Kamarakoto culture and the possible extinction of the Kamarakotos themselves, surely the loss of their identity. This final result can hardly eventuate before Kamarata is reached by wheeled traffic, of which there is already some prospect but which is not very likely in the visible future. The end may thus be slow in coming, but it appears inevitable.

Apart from any sentimental considerations, it will be deplorable, indeed tragic, if this natural process is allowed to go on without check or guidance. On humanitarian, social, and economic grounds, it is strongly desirable in the first place that Kamarakoto culture (and these remarks apply to all of the many other tribes in a similar situation) should not be uprooted faster than the Kamarakotos can adapt themselves to new ways. This uprooting is the "natural" event and it is one that the usual agencies, religious²³⁵ and civil, often promote rather than prevent. In the second place it is no less desirable that the useful and admirable elements of Kamarakoto culture, which will in the ordinary way disappear just as completely as the undesirable elements and probably sooner than the latter, should be saved and perpetuated.

[731] In the promotion of health, civilization has at least an antidote to offer against the new diseases that it will introduce, and it could considerably improve the present mortality record of the Kamarakotos. It can also guard them against famines such as are said to have occurred infrequently in the past. Aside from these points, it is hard to see how the Indians stand to gain anything by being "civilized." They are remarkably happy now, poverty is unknown, and hunger and misery are not the common lot but rare historic occurrences. The Kamarakotos already know thoroughly well how to live in their own environment. No white man can teach them: on the contrary, if white men attempt to colonize and to become self-supporting in this region they are sure to find that they can do so at present only by learning the technique from the Indians. I think no impartial observer would deny that the average Kamarakoto is now mentally

²³⁵ [see footnote on p. 334, category 116 - Analysis]
[text continues on p. 281]